WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method comprising:

collecting information in a network device;

determining in the network device when to transmit a subset of the collected information to a collection system; and

determining in the network device the subset of the collected information to be transmitted at a given time.

2.The method of claim 1 in which the collected information comprises values stored in counters.

3.The method of claim 1 in which the subset represents a value of a counter.

4.The method of claim 1 in which the subset represents values of multiple counters.

5.The method of claim 1 in which determining when to send is user-configurable.

6.The method of claim 1 in which determining when to send comprises:

determining a low peak period of a network operation; and

sending the subset during the low peak period.

7.The method of claim 1 further comprising tagging the value of the collected information with an identifier.

8.The method of claim 7 further comprising using a locally significant tag value as the identifier.

9.The method of claim 8 wherein the locally significant tag value is an array index.

10.The method of claim 9 further comprising associating the locally significant value of the tag with the globally significant value of the identifier and announcing the association through a communications channel of a computer network system.

11.The method of claim 10 in which a communication channel used to announce tag and identifier associations is the channel used to transmit collected information.

12.The method of claim 1 in which the collected information that is unchanged is not transmitted from the network device to the collection system.

13.The method of claim 1 further comprising sending acknowledgements from the collection system to the network device when the collection system receives the collected information.

14.The method of claim 1 in which the collected information is reported periodically.

15.The method of claim 1 further comprising establishing a signaling phase between the network device and the collection system prior to sending the collected information.

16.The method of claim 15 in which the signaling phase includes exchanging information relating to transfer and authentication of the collected information sent between the network device and the collection system through a communications channel.

17.The method of claim 16 in which the communications channel comprises a secure connection.

18.The method of claim 1 in which the collected information comprises event logging records.

19.A system comprising:

a collection system coupled to a network device through a communications channel of a computer network system;

a network device collecting information and configured to determine when to send a subset of the collected information to a collection system; and

determine in the network device a subset of the collected information to be transmitted at a given time.

20.The system of claim 19 in which the collected information comprises values stored in counters.

21.The system of claim 20 in which the subset is a value of a counter.

22.The system of claim 20 in which the subset is a value of multiple counters.

23.The system of claim 19 in which the network device is configured to determine when to send a subset of the collected information.

24.The system of claim 19 in which the network device being configured to determine when to send includes the network device being configured to:

determine a low peak period of a network operation; and

send the subset during the low peak period.

25.The system of claim 19 in which the value of the collected information is transmitted with an identifier.